



Press release

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ABCDF RESUMES MUSTARD AGENT DRAINING

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md. – Workers at the Aberdeen Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (ABCDF) resumed draining mustard agent containers last night following an eight-week operational pause to examine and repair areas of the glove boxes in which the draining takes place.

The operational pause was initiated after a low-level mustard vapor leak was detected November 14 in the glove box sump piping of one of the drain stations during the rinsing of an agent container. Further examination of all three drain station glove boxes, using radiographic, ultrasonic and dye-penetration techniques, identified some corrosion in the piping and in the glove box sump.

To ensure the integrity of the glove box system and eliminate the potential for further leaks, the drain piping is being removed and the sump pans coated with a corrosion-resistant epoxy.

Draining has resumed in one drain station while repairs are underway in the other two. The drain stations are located within the Neutralization Building, which is under strict ventilation controls to prevent any release of agent vapor to the outside atmosphere.

Since mustard agent disposal operations began April 23, 2003, workers at the ABCDF, located in the Edgewood Area of Aberdeen Proving Ground, have successfully neutralized and destroyed more than 78 tons of agent.